

SENATOR LYNCH: Mr. President and members, I used to think as I sat and listened to all of you talk on the floor who I assumed probably knew more than anybody else about anything that there is a lot you don't know about local government. For example, it was just mentioned that if we do have to reduce, because of the \$6 million reverting back to counties, they ought to find a way to be able to offset that at the local level. Apparently, especially people who are lawyers in this body, can't remember that there was a lawsuit mandating the counties have to pay for indigent health care. I have got to tell you that more than offsets what you think you are giving back in the way of a gift taking over state aid for Medicaid. I also want to tell you that this state has the distinction of being only one of four in the whole country that mandates that local property taxpayers pay for any health care costs at all. We have got a great distinction there. That doesn't make it fair either, does it. I don't know where you begin and where you end but I can tell you there are a number of counties because of the state imposed limit on spending that are already at their spending limit anyhow. They have been cutting back a lot of years and a lot more than some state operations have been cutting back. If I understand it right, we started off with about \$880 million worth of requests and you got it back to 860 and then 840. Last year we spent about 824. So you crank back in what you were going to give in aid to take over health care costs, those costs were there. There is no real transfer or additional cost as far as I am concerned. At this point in time, I am not convinced that these kinds of cuts make any sense at all and it shouldn't I don't think be approved.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Thank you, Senator Lynch. Senator Sieck.

SENATOR SIECK: Yes, Mr. President, I have to agree with Senator Lynch. He said about the same thing that I was going to say. Yes, we do pick up...the state picks up the medical program but we must remember that we are mandated to take care of those health cases that come into our county that cannot afford it and they are creeping up considerable, and by you refusing an amendment here just a little earlier, we are going to have some more. That is just as sure as anything. So again, you are going to increase the property tax. When this is all said and done and we keep on going